

The most important lesson I've learned from this quarter is that there are a huge amount of web tools available that can enhance my professional practice as an educator in some way. Some tools make life easier for a teacher by saving time, making organization easier, reducing paper usage, saving space, etc. Other tools can be used to create a powerful learning experience for students, which may help increase motivation. Before this class I knew about some of these tools, but never really got my hands dirty, as they say. I think it's difficult for teachers to try new things in the midst of being so ridiculously busy with other instructional responsibilities and requirements. I've learned now that the time put into exploring a new tool can be completely worth it when it helps your students learn or improves your practice as a teacher. I just have to give it a try!

Since class began in January, I have already started using some of the tools regularly for both my professional and personal endeavors. I've used Google Docs and Spreadsheets to communicate and keep track of wedding-related plans with my mom, who usually does not like to try out anything new on the computer! I've been using Delicious to organize the information for my research project and ideas for the classroom. These are just two minor changes I've made because of this class. I now look forward to exploring options and best practices for incorporating these tools into instruction. I can't wait to have my own classroom so I can really start to experiment and see what works and what benefits my students the most. One of the greatest benefits of taking this course is that I am much more comfortable, confident, and aware of the technological possibilities for classrooms.